

The international community has seen recently how Taiwan departs itself as a responsible stakeholder and facilitator of peace. Last August, my administration proposed an East China Sea Peace Initiative urging that negotiation take precedence over confrontation regarding the sovereignty dispute over the Diaoyutai Islets. The following November, Taipei and Tokyo began negotiations on an East China Sea fishery agreement. Sixteen rounds of such talks had been held since 1996 but no agreement was ever reached. This time, both sides decided to jointly conserve and manage fishery resources in the Agreement Area of the East China Sea without changing their respective territorial and maritime claims regarding the Diaoyutai Islets. A fishery agreement was thus signed six days ago which safeguards the security of fishing boats from both sides in the Agreement Area, which is twice the size of Taiwan. This agreement marks a historic milestone in the development of Taiwan-Japan relations, and sets a good example of how the concerned parties can find ways to settle their dispute and preserve peace and stability in the region at the same time.

Our efforts over the past five years to enhance Taiwan's participation in the international community have also resulted in concrete progress. The Republic of China has kept intact its diplomatic relations with its 23 allies, and has enhanced its substantive relations with other countries. For instance, we signed an investment agreement with Japan in 2011, and are working to sign economic cooperation agreements with Singapore and New Zealand, respectively, in the near future. Meanwhile, our health minister has attended the World Health Assembly (WHA) of the WHO as an official observer since 2009, the same year as Taiwan acceded to the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) of the WTO. For five years in a row, former Vice President Lien Chan at my request has attended as "leader's representative" at the Leaders' Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. On March 19 this year I led an official delegation to attend the investiture of Pope Francis, the first time for a Republic of China president to meet with a pope in the last 71 years, ever since the two countries established diplomatic ties in 1942. Taiwan's enhanced international presence attests to a virtuous cycle of improved cross-strait relations that encourages greater international support for allowing Taiwan further opportunities to play its role as a responsible stakeholder. This in turn further enhances regional peace and stability, which is in the best interest of the international community.

V. TAIWAN-U.S. TIES: SECURITY, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL

My administration is fully aware that strength is fundamental to achieving peace. When I took office five years ago, my administration worked promptly to restore high-level trust between Taipei and Washington. As former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in 2011 in Honolulu, Hawaii, Taiwan is an important security and economic partner of the United States. We deeply appreciate the relationship we have with the United States, including US arms sales to Taiwan. Only with a sufficient self-defense capability can Taiwan confidently engage in a dialogue with mainland China. The stability engendered by America's enhanced presence in the Western Pacific will certainly help.

The United States is Taiwan's third largest trading partner but remains the most important source of our technology. However large a trading partner mainland China is to Taiwan, the United States has always been an important trade and investment partner to

Taiwan. The ICT (information and communication technology) industries are Taiwan's most important export sector and they are the largest recipient of U.S. investment. We definitely want to deepen our economic ties with the United States. After successfully resolving the beef import issue last year, the Republic of China resumed trade negotiations with the U.S. under the 1994 Taiwan-US Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). Obviously, Taiwan needs to accelerate its pace of trade liberalization. For the good of its economic prosperity and national security, Taiwan cannot afford to be left out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Culturally, American values and its high academic standards have attracted Chinese students since Yung Wing became the first Chinese student to study in the U.S. back in 1847. Generations of Chinese students who studied in the United States have brought American values back to their homeland, making tremendous contributions to China's modernization, including the 1911 revolution. Today, the United States still remains the most sought-after academic destination for Taiwan students.

Taiwan is grateful to the United States for letting Taiwan join the Visa Waiver Program beginning in November last year. The Republic of China is the 37th nation in the world to secure that status, and the only one that does not have formal diplomatic relations with the United States. The more than 400,000 Taiwan visitors to the U.S. each year not only take in American culture and natural scenery, they also shop very seriously in the United States and thus help reduce the U.S. trade deficit with Taiwan. In a word, relations between the Republic of China and the United States have continued to thrive and grow since the end of formal diplomatic ties in 1979.

Nevertheless, Taiwan still faces many challenges, with only limited resources at its disposal. In formulating Taiwan's national security strategy, my administration has steered Taiwan toward a tripartite national security framework. The first part involves institutionalization of the rapprochement with mainland China so that neither side would ever contemplate resorting to non-peaceful means to settle their differences. The second part involves making Taiwan a model world citizen by upholding the principles of a liberal democracy, championing free trade and providing foreign aid to the international community. The third part involves strengthening national defense capability. This national security strategy is formulated to facilitate peaceful and positive development of cross-strait ties while remaining grounded in a pragmatic realization of the challenges we face. In other words, Taiwan and the United States share the same values and interests in preserving regional peace and stability.

VI. TAIWAN'S ULTIMATE VALUE: A BEACON OF DEMOCRACY

States in a security partnership frequently fear being entrapped or abandoned by their partners. In the past, some in the United States have expressed concern that as mainland China rises, Taiwan might someday entrap the United States in an unnecessary conflict with mainland China. Others fear that Taiwan is tilting toward mainland China, thus "abandoning" the United States. Both arguments imply that the United States should reduce support for Taiwan. But neither view is warranted. My administration's pursuit of rapprochement with mainland China has clearly helped preserve and enhance peace in the Taiwan Strait. My administration's adherence to the Constitu-

tion of the Republic of China legally rules out any possibility of a reckless change in the status quo.

Taiwan has so much in common with the United States, from our love of democracy, to respect for human rights and the rule of law, to support for free trade, and even to an intense passion for basketball and baseball! We are also crazy about Jeremy Lin and Chien-Ming Wang. Taiwan cherishes its long-standing friendship with the United States and will always cherish the values and culture that the Chinese people have developed over five thousand years. Preserving the Republic of China has immense importance that goes far beyond the borders of Taiwan. For the first time in Chinese history, we in Taiwan have proved that democracy can thrive in a Chinese society. It presents a shining ray of hope to the 1.3 billion Chinese people on the mainland. I know how much this means to the government and people of the United States, just as it does to my administration and the people of Taiwan.

Ladies and gentlemen, my administration will steer this democracy through the sea of change in East Asia. We will endeavor to strengthen peace and prosperity in the Taiwan Strait; and, in the meantime, we will strive for an enhanced international presence for Taiwan that allows it to play its role as a responsible stakeholder in the international community. I feel nothing but confidence about the future of the Republic of China!

Thank you.

HONORING AARON JOEL LAUGHLIN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Aaron Joel Laughlin. Aaron is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Aaron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Aaron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Aaron has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Aaron organized, procured funding for and oversaw the construction of a sidewalk between the Macon Senior Citizen Housing and the Wal-Mart and C&R Supermarket in Macon, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Aaron Joel Laughlin for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MATIOK MATHIANG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud MatioK Mathiang for receiving the Arvada Wheat